urge my colleagues to work diligently to ensure that no other citizen will ever be forced to endure this type of treatment.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on my special order tonight.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MICA). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Hawaii?

There was no objection.

SOCIAL SECURITY SOLVENCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, to whoever might be looking at this session, this is going to be sort of a briefing on Social Security.

Social Security has come to the forefront of one of the very important issues in this Presidential debate, certainly with every senior, certainly also with every worker in this country as they now pay more into the Social Security tax than they do in the income tax, and certainly for our kids, our grandkids, those kids that are not born yet, is Social Security going to be there for them.

Let me start with my first chart. I would like to thank Senator ROD GRAMS from Minnesota. He has introduced legislation to keep Social Security solvent, as I have. I have been chairing the bipartisan Social Security Task Force of the Committee on the Budget and, so, we have been working on Social Security for the last 5 years trying to get public attention to the fact that Social Security is insolvent and eventually there is going to be less money coming in than is required for benefits and the challenge facing this country if we are going to make a commitment not to reduce benefits, and we should do that, not to increase taxes even further on workers in this country, and we should do that.

When Franklin Delano Roosevelt created the Social Security program over 6 decades ago, he wanted it to feature a private sector component to build retirement income. Social Security was supposed to be one leg of a three-legged stool to support retirees. It was supposed to go hand-in-hand with personal savings and private pension plans.

In fact, it is interesting, looking up and researching in the archives in 1935, the Senate on two occasions voted that private personal investments should be an option to the Government handling the system. When it finally went to the conference committee between the House and the Senate, it turned around strictly to a Government-run program, a pay-as-you-go program where current workers pay in their taxes and immediately it goes out to current retirees.

This is Berry Pump, an intern that is going to be helping me, from Iowa. So our intern program is an excellent opportunity for juniors in high school. So, Berry, thank you very much.

The system really is now stretched to its limits. Seventy-eight million baby boomers begin retiring in 2008. That means they go out of the, if you will, paying in mode, paying their Social Security taxes, to the taking out mode. And these baby boomers are at the high end of the income scale, so they pay a much higher tax since our tax now is 12.4 percent on the first $76,000. Social Security expending exceeds tax revenues in 2015, and so the problem is where do we start getting the extra money starting in 2015.

The bottom blip is Social Security trust funds go broke in 2037, although the crisis could arrive much sooner. And the crisis is trying to come up with that money. The danger historically as we look at what has happened through history, politicians in Washington and the President, for example, in 1997 and again in 1983, when money was short to pay out benefits, legislation was passed to reduce benefits and increase taxes. And that is why it is so very important that we deal with this problem now, we do not delay, we do not put it off. The longer we put off this problem, the more drastic the changes are going to have to be. So I think it is very important that we deal with this very important program as soon as we can.

Some have said, well, these are just people's estimates of the future. Not so. Insolvency is an absolute. Insolvency is certain. We know how many people there are and we know when they are going to retire. We count the people. We know what their ages are. We know what their earning is, how much they are paying in. We know that people will live longer in retirement.

When Social Security started in 1935, the average age of death was 62 years. For this pay-as-you-go program, that meant most people paid in all their lives but never took anything out. It worked very well. But now the life span of individuals has been increasing substantially. We know how much these individuals will pay in, how much they will take out. The payroll taxes will not cover benefits starting in 2015. And the shortfalls will add up to $120 trillion between 2015 and 2075.

So, in tomorrow's dollars, in those inflated dollars, it is going to take $120 trillion more than the tax revenue coming in from the Social Security tax to pay benefits.

I suspect most of us do not know how much really a trillion dollars is. I certainly do not. But you can compare it maybe with our annual budget, which now is approximately $1.8 trillion annual budget. It is a huge challenge. And that is why it has been so easy for this Chamber and the Senate and the President not to take action on it. It is too easy to demagogue. And with this Chamber running for election every 2 years, it is easy to put it off. We cannot do that any more. It is not fair to our kids. It is not fair to our grand kids. Our pay-as-you-go retirement system will not meet the challenge of demographic change.

This is an example of workers per Social Security beneficiary. Back in 1940, there were 38 workers in this country paying in their Social Security tax for every one retiree. Now there are three workers paying in their increased Social Security tax for every one retiree. And by 2025 there is going to be two workers paying in their Social Security tax for every one retiree.

This was developed because of demographic changes. One is the falling birth rate after the baby boomers after World War II. So the number of workers has not increased at the rate it was in the past. And secondly, the life span is tremendously increased. So if you reach retirement age, 65, then on average you are going to live another 18 to 20 years. So life span is going up, the number of workers' birth rate is going down, and that leaves us with a huge problem of insolvency.

The little blue blip on the top left, maybe it should be green, is the period between now and someplace around 2015 when there are more revenues coming in from Social Security taxes than is used to pay benefits. The reason there is a surplus now in the Social Security tax is because we raised the Social Security tax, Congress and the President raised the Social Security tax substantially in 1983. And we will be looking at that chart in a moment.

What happens after 2015 is the shortfall. The red represents how much money we are going to need above and beyond the Social Security taxes that will be coming in from American workers.

Berry will help us with the next five.

Some have suggested we really do not need to do anything now because economic growth is great, we are going along smoothly. The fact is economic growth will not solve the Social Security problem. Let me tell you why. Social Security benefits are indexed to wage growth. In other words, the more wages you earn, the more taxes you pay in earlier. But when you retire, the more benefits you will get out because the benefits are directly related to the wages you earn.

When the economy grows, workers pay more in taxes but also will earn more in benefits when they retire.

☐ 2000

Growth makes the numbers look better now but leaves a larger hole to fill later. That is what has happened. Three years ago, we were going to run out of money by 2012; but with the economy expanding, now the projection is that we are going to have less money than needed 3 years later, in 2015. But when these people retire, then they are going to take out more. So over the long run, it does not offer a solution to Social Security.

The administration has used these short-term advantages as an excuse to do nothing. Politicians have used this as an excuse to do nothing. I think the fact is clear that many people have called this the third rail of politics. They have suggested if you come up with a fix for Social Security, you are going to be criticized so aggressively by one of the most powerful groups in this Nation, the AARP is going to say, ''Don't mess around with our Social Security.''

Working as chairman of the bipartisan Social Security task force, it was interesting to find out that the people from AARP understand the problems with Social Security and so they are no longer criticizing individuals or the Presidential candidates that come up with potential solutions for Social Security because they know it is a huge problem in the future.

There is no Social Security account with your name on it. A couple of footnotes on this issue. The Supreme Court on two occasions now has ruled that there is no entitlement, no connection, between the Social Security taxes that you pay in and your rights to have any benefits. These trust fund balances are available to finance future benefit payments and other trust fund expenditures but only in a bookkeeping sense. They are claims on the Treasury that when redeemed will have to be financed by raising taxes, borrowing from the public, reducing benefits or somehow reducing other expenditures. This is from the Office of Management and Budget.

Some have compared the trust fund, that it is somehow a magical safeguard, that the money will be there. I like to use the comparison, what would happen with or without a trust fund, if we had no trust fund, coming up with the money to meet our promises, and I think we are going to do that. I think we have got to do that. If there was no trust fund, you would come up with the money in one of three ways: You would either reduce other spending, increase borrowing or increase taxes or reduce benefits.

If there is a trust fund and you start calling on the trust fund but it is a bunch of IOUs in a box, government still has to come up with those same alternatives to pay back the money that has been borrowed from the trust fund and, that is, you increase borrowing, you increase taxes, you reduce benefits or you cut other expenditures. I do not think this body or the President is going to cut other expenditures of the Federal Government to the extent that is needed to cover the Social Security shortfall. I think the greater danger is in a continuing decision to say, ''Well, it's easier just to raise taxes a little bit or cut benefits a little bit.''

Some have suggested that if we just pay down the debt held by the public and use that interest savings, that will help take care of the problem of Social Security and keep it solvent until 2057. In fact, Vice President GORE's plan, in effect, says, Let us add another giant IOU to the Social Security trust fund. But in trying to look at the problem of coming up with the finances necessary, and it is going to take $46.6 trillion to come up with the money to pay off Social Security until 2057. You cannot do that.

This is the total debt held by the public. This is the total debt that everybody is talking about, bragging about, being able to pay down maybe in the next 10 to 12 years. The interest savings from that $3.4 trillion can never solve a $46.6 trillion problem. So adding another IOU to the trust fund will not work.

I have demonstrated this same problem in another graph. If you will, paying off the trust fund over this same period of time, we start with about a $180 billion a year savings in interest charges if we are going to pay off the $3.4 trillion of debt held by the public. That grows around to 2018 to be about $260 billion a year, and so the blue line represents, assuming that this $260 billion a year is now going to be dedicated every year to Social Security, it still only represents that bottom two inches of an 18-inch problem. And so the shortfall still remains $35 trillion. So to simply say we are going to add an IOU and somehow government is going to come up with the money and add this extra interest charge, interest savings to the Social Security trust fund is not going to solve the problem even if all the money was there.

But again the problem is, where do you come up with the dollars? You come up with it by increasing taxes, cutting benefits, increasing borrowing. Just for the next 57 years, if we were to borrow that extra $35 trillion, the economists suggest that that would so disrupt the market and the economy in this country that it is not feasible. Remember, I said for 75 years it is going to take $120 trillion. There has got to be program changes. They can be made. ROD GRAMS and I and several others have introduced legislation that do not reduce a current or near-term retiree's benefits, that end up trying to accommodate by having a greater return on some of that investment that the worker is sending in in taxes. The average worker now is only getting less than a 2 percent return on those Social Security taxes they send in and we can do much better than that.

The biggest risk is doing nothing at all. Social Security has a total unfunded liability of over $20 trillion. Let me sort of go over these numbers. Over the next 75 years in today's dollars, it would be $20 trillion. If we could come up with the $20 trillion now and start earning interest on it, we could solve the problem. If we wait year by year, then it is $120 trillion over the next 75 years and it is the 46, $47 trillion until 2057 when Vice President GORE says that it is going to keep the trust fund solvent. The Social Security trust fund contains nothing but IOUs. To keep paying promised Social Security benefits, the payroll tax will have to be increased by nearly 50 percent or benefits will have to be cut by 30 percent. I say that not to scare people but just to try to send the message that the longer we delay, the more drastic the solution. Something has got to be done now, because I think it would be unconscionable to increase taxes even further.

The Social Security lock box. A little gimmicky maybe. I introduced a bill so that we would not spend any of the Social Security surplus. But this Congress has been spending the Social Security surplus for the last 40 years. So any extra money that comes into the Social Security trust fund has been spent for other government programs. The bad part of that is that it becomes almost an entitlement. Any program spending that we spend for 2 or 3 years, there is such a lobbying group, an infrastructure built up to insist that we continue spending that money that government has continued to grow. So increasing discretionary domestic social spending is very dangerous in terms of the obligations to our kids and our grandkids on future generations.

The Social Security lockbox is what Republicans made. The decision was a good way to put that Social Security surplus aside, not spend it on other government programs, and it sort of ended up reducing the amount that we spend on government. That means that it has helped give us the kind of huge surplus that we are now experiencing this calendar year and again next year. It is interesting. The Vice President has said the lockbox is a good idea but I would remind everyone, Mr. Speaker, that we passed the lockbox legislation in this Chamber, we sent it to the Senate, and now the Senate Democrats are filibustering the lockbox law that we sent them. If the Vice President would ask the Democrats in the Senate to pass that bill, there is no doubt in my mind that it would be passed and sent to the President for signature.

I am going to get in a little bit to talking about the diminishing returns on your Social Security investment. The real return of Social Security is less than 2 percent. It is about 1.9 percent on average for all workers. But it shows a negative return for some workers compared to the over 7 percent real return that you can get on average over the last 120 years in the stock market.

As you look at this chart, and I hope the cameras can show it closely enough, minorities on average are going to have a negative return on the money they send in for Social Security. A young black male working today on average will die at age 62½. That means that they will pay in Social Security taxes all their life and not be entitled to anything except a $240 death tax for burial. So they are really getting gypped. The average again is 1.9 percent. Compare that to the market of real return of 7 percent. So if you can get a better return on some of that money being sent in for

Social Security, that has got to be part of the solution.

Then part of the problem is the transition cost. How do we make this transition from wanting to start some of those retirement accounts that are going to get some of the higher interest rate returns and the challenge, of course, is using some of the surplus coming in to government today, some of the Social Security surplus, some of the general fund surplus to start some real investments that are going to give Americans an average income worker the opportunity to be a rich retiree.

With this chart, I have attempted to demonstrate in another way what a bad investment Social Security is. This does not include the disability insurance. So the disability insurance is an absolute. No plan touches the disability insurance. So that part is insurance. You take your chances. Some people need the disability insurance and some do not. What I am talking about is the retirement, the rest of, I think it is approximately 10.4 percent of the 12.4 percent that is used for retirement purposes. And so that is what we are talking about. To get that portion back, if you retired in 1940, then that was pretty good. Taxes were not very high in those early years and you received everything you and your employer put into Social Security taxes and you received that back in 2 months. In 1960, it took 2 years to get it back. In 1980, it took 4 years to get it back. In 1995, if you retired in 1995, you have got to live 16 years after you retire to get your Social Security benefits back that you paid in, to break even for what you and your employer put into Social Security taxes. And you see 2015, 26 years; 2025, 26 years. The reason this goes down a skosh is because of the fact that in 1983 when they passed that law, they actually increased the retirement age gradually, so now it goes gradually up from 65 to 67 over the next 20 years.

This is a picture of Bonnie's and my grandkids. I have the picture on the wall of my office. When I come to vote in this Chamber on legislation, I look at that picture and think how is it going to affect my grandkids, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 years from now. Our youngest here is Frances and our oldest in this picture is Nick, but both of them are going to have real challenges if they are ever going to get Social Security back.

☐ 2015

It is interesting that young people today do not believe that Social Security is going to be there yet they are saving less than the previous generations of young people. How do we encourage more savings? The challenge is to fix this program now, because if we simply add IOUs to the trust fund, if we simply say that look, we are going to pass a law and put $20 trillion in the trust fund, then the actuaries would score Social Security as solvent for the next 75 years. The problem is still when there is less money coming in in taxes in 2015 than what is needed for benefits, where do you come up with the money?

I am afraid what is going to happen if we continue to put off solving this problem is my grandkids, your kids and grandkids and their kids, are going to end up paying huge taxes. Right now the estimate is that if we do nothing to cover medicaid, Medicare and Social Security, you would have to go to a 47 percent tax on payroll. Our economy in this country was built on encouraging those people that work and that save, that try and invest, and if we were to put that kind of taxes on our workers I think there would be a generational rebellion. If we simply say, look, we are going to live how we want to live today and somehow make our kids and our grandkids pay for it later, we cannot do that.

This is Salina; this is James; this is Henry; this is George, he is a real tiger; Emily; and I have actually two more grandkids I will have in the next couple of months. Maybe it is a situation where if all of us were grandfathers and we were in this chamber and we were concerned about the obligations that we are putting on our kids and grandkids as we make decisions to pass laws to make our lives easier now but put the debt on them, we have a $5.6 trillion debt that needs to be paid down.

This is a chart on taxes. So just briefly in 1940 the Social Security tax was 2 percent on the first $3,000, or a maximum of $60. By 1960 it was 6 percent on the first $4,800, or a maximum of $288. By 1980 it was 10.16 percent of the first $25,900, for a total of $2,630. Today it is 12.4 percent on the first $76,200, for a total of $9,448.

If we continue to add benefits to Social Security, not correct the problems with Social Security, then it is going to be my grandkids and your grandkids that are going to be facing the kind of increased tax that is going to be intolerable.

Seventy-eight percent of families, working families in the United States, now pay more in the payroll tax than they do in the income tax. So we continue to raise this payroll tax. It is a tax that hurts low-income people much more than high income people. It is the kind of tax that we should not be increasing. So let us not do it.

The 6 principles that I agree with that Senator ROD GRAMS has agreed with, that Governor George W. Bush has agreed with, are we protect current and future beneficiaries. We allow freedom of choice. We preserve the safety net. We make Americans better off, not worse off. We create a fully funded system and no tax increases, and no reductions in benefits for those retirees, or near-term retirees.

Personal retirement accounts, they do not come out of Social Security; they help Social Security earn more money to assure that those benefits are going to be there. They become part of your Social Security retirement benefits and a worker will own his or her own retirement account. That means if an individual might die before they are eligible for retirement, the money goes into their estate. Unlike today, if you die before your retirement then there is nothing there and it simply is added to the pot for other future retirees and beneficiaries and disability individuals; limited to safe investments that will earn more than the 1.9 percent paid by Social Security. So nobody is suggesting that we simply give this money to individuals and they be allowed to invest it however they want. All of the plans that I have seen say that it has to be a structured, limited type investment, something like maybe a 401(k), something like the Federal Thrift Savings Plan, where you choose from several safe investments; you have some options but they are all safe investments. In my bill that I introduced, I limit it to four safe investments with a potential expansion of additional safe investments that is decided by the treasurer of the United States.

So the point is can we get a better return on our investment than 1.9 percent? The answer is, yes.

I borrowed this from Senator GRAMS because I think it is so important that we have to make sure we do this with the prerequisite that we do not increase taxes and that we do not reduce benefits for retirees or near-term retirees. Term retirement accounts offer more retirement security. If John Doe makes an average of $36,000 a year, he can expect monthly payments of $1,280 from Social Security. If he puts 10 percent of the 12.4 percent into a savings account, he can get $6,000 a month from his personal retirement savings account.

Remember the picture of Nicholas, my oldest grandson, he painted my fence last year and I said, look, you have $180. I would like you to put it in a Roth IRA, and he said, gosh, grandpa, I sure wanted to put that in the bank and maybe buy a car when I was 16. So I went step through step trying to explain the magic of compound interest and what it would do every year if it was drawing the kind of interest that the equity stock markets have averaged over the last 20 years, the ups and downs. So I went through this and I said, look, by the time you are 68, that $180 will have grown to almost $64,000, and if you wait another 6 years and 8 months, it will be almost $140,000.

He seemed impressed but he said, well, grandpa, can I just maybe put a little bit of it in that Roth IRA and then put the rest in the bank for a car? And I think it demonstrates sort of part of the problem today to encourage people to save. It is so important that everyone, Mr. Speaker, everyone, young, medium age, older age, discipline themselves to put more money in a savings account. The savings account in the United States of America is one of the lowest out of the industrialized world. We have to do better in encouraging savings. This Chamber has come a long ways, developing the regular IRA, the Roth IRA. Now in a bill that we have sent to the Senate, we expand how much you are allowed to save in those IRAs; educational savings accounts. It is important that we encourage that extra savings, but it is even more important that we deal with Social Security and not put it off.

In the law of 1935, we left it operational for State and local governments whether they wanted to get in the Social Security program or have their own retirement program. Galveston County, Texas, was a county that decided it wanted to do its own investments so their employees do not have the payroll deduction. They have a deduction that goes into their personal retirement savings accounts.

Let me just compare Galveston with Social Security. Death benefits now in Galveston are $75,000 with a Social Security burial benefit of $253. The disability benefit per month under the Galveston plan is $2,749. With Social Security it would be $1,280. The retirement benefits per month in Galveston, this is disability, the retirement benefits are $4,790 compared to $1,280. It is an example of how real investments can make a much greater difference than what is happening in the pay-as-you-go Social Security program. Social Security is sort of like, I saw a cartoon I think was interesting that represented the pay-as-you-go program. It had this person coming in to Uncle Sam with a hat on in the cartoon saying, well, now just how does Social Security work? And Uncle Sam was saying, well, see this list here. Now, you send money to the name on the top of this list and you add your name to the bottom of this list, and then when you retire you will get all this money.

A chain letter is sort of like the Social Security program. You depend on somebody else later on that might send you that money when you retire, and that is dangerous.

Spouses and survivors benefits under the Galveston County plan, and I quote this young lady that gave this quote, she said, thank God that some wise man privatized Social Security here. If I had regular Social Security, I would be broke.

After her husband died, Winnie Colehill used her death benefit check of $126,000 to pay for his funeral and she also entered college herself. Under Social Security, she would have gotten $255.

San Diego has a similar plan. San Diego enjoys PRAs, personal retirement accounts. A 30-year-old employee who earns a salary of $30,000 for 35 years and contributes 6 percent to his PRA would receive $3,000 per month in retirement benefits. Under the current system, he would contribute twice as much to Social Security but receive only $1,077; $1,077 in Social Security compared to $3,000 per month in their retirement plan.

The difference between San Diego's system of PRAs and Social Security is more than the difference in a check. It is also the difference between ownership and dependence. It is you owning that amount of money; not leaving it up to politicians to mess around with that money or your potential future benefits.

I thought this was very interesting. Even those who oppose PRAs agree they offer more retirement security, and I am quoting from a letter from Senator BARBARA BOXER and Senator DIANE FEINSTEIN and Senator TED KENNEDY to President Clinton on April 22, 1999, in support of allowing San Diego to keep continuing with their private retirement system. They said in this letter, millions of our constituents will receive higher retirement benefits from their current public pensions than they would under Social Security, and that is the truth. So why do not we do it?

☐ 2030

The U.S. trails other countries in saving its retirement system. As advanced as we are and as smart as we are, other countries are moving ahead of us with their retirement systems that they are starting to get real investment returns from.

In the 18 years since Chile offered the PRAs, 95 percent of Chilean workers have created accounts. Their average rate of return has been 11.3 percent for years. Among others, Australia, Britain, Switzerland, they offer their workers PRA. It becomes an option to own their own savings account where they can get their own returns on that money.

British workers choose PRAs. With the 10 percent returns, we cannot blame them. Two out of three British workers, and this is a socialist country, enrolled in the second-tier social security system chose to enroll in PRAs. British workers have enjoyed a 10 percent return on their pension investments over the past few years. The pool of these personal retirement accounts in Britain now exceeds nearly $1.4 trillion, larger than the entire economy of Great Britain.

Based on a family income of $58,475, the return on a PRA is even better. Over a 20-year period, if you put in 10 percent of your payroll, you would end up having $274,000. The bottom blue mark is 2 percent of your payroll. At 2 percent of your payroll, it is $55,000. If we left it in for 30 years, and here again is the magic of compound interest, these investments held over that 30 or 40 years is so significant, and can again make an average income worker a rich retiree.

If one leaves it in for 40 years, and we are allowed to put in 10 percent of the payroll, and social security now takes 12.4 percent, we would have $1,389,000. If one was to get a 5 percent return on that money, it would still be about $70,000 a year without even going into the principal.

Again, let me conclude by saying 78 percent of families pay more in payroll taxes than income taxes. Several of us, bipartisan, when I chaired the social security bipartisan task force, it was interesting that the demographics, the current demographics of how long people are expected to live and therefore how much it is going to cost future taxpayers to pay their benefits. With our medical technology, some medical futurists are now estimating that within 25 years a person will be able to live to be 100 years old if they want to. Within 35 to 40 years, an individual can live to be 110 years old .

Are we doing what we need to do as individuals in putting aside savings to accommodate the kind of living standard that the future kind of medical technology is going to allow? Of course, if that happens to social security, then the tremendous extra pressures on social security in future generations that are going to have to pay the increased tax will occur.

Right now we are talking about adding prescription drugs to Medicare. Medicare could go broke with the legislation that has passed as early as 2004 or 2005. If we add prescription drugs to it, then my guess is a couple of things will happen. We end up with a government-run program that if it starts costing too much, it is going to look at rationing. That rationing is going to hold true whether it is Medicare and the government running that program, or whether it is social security.

So my bottom line, Mr. Speaker, is, let us not delay. Let us not neglect this promise any longer. We have lost the last 8 years. Let us make sure that we move ahead with this next administration and come up with a program that will keep social security solvent.

THE PROBLEM OF ILLEGAL NARCOTICS IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, usually I come on Tuesday nights to address the House on the problem of illegal narcotics in our society, and what the Congress can do working together to try to resolve the problem of drugs.

Tonight I will only have a few minutes to sort of summarize, because our time is limited.

We have watched on television, a front line report about illegal narcotics. It has gotten the attention of many Americans and Members of Congress.

I came to the floor about a week or two ago and held up this chart. I chair the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy, and Human Resources. It is one of the most shocking statistics or report that I have ever received as a Member of Congress or chairing a committee responsible for drug policy.

For the first time in the history of recordkeeping of the United States, drug-induced deaths in 1998 exceeded murder, homicides, in this country. That means we had more people dying